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THE LIBERTARIAN CASE IN FAVOR OF WOMEN'S LIBERATION

by Peter Sherman

At first glance there would seem to be no particular reason why the libertarian case *in favor of* women's liberation should be stressed in a periodical such as *The Abolitionist*, which is presumably dedicated to libertarianism. For is not the doctrine of libertarianism paradigmatically in favor of all types of liberation, from black and Puerto Rican and Indian liberation to student liberation, from liberation of all third world peoples suffering under the yoke of U.S. imperialism to liberation of *all* people suffering from domestic U.S. statism? Are women to be excluded from this great libertarian demand that all aggression against downtrodden groups cease? Or is it held that somehow women alone are not being oppressed?

In recent months, however, several eminent libertarians have attacked the women's liberation movement: Jerome Tuccille, in "On Sexism" in the *Libertarian Forum* (Box 341, Madison Square Station, NYC 10010) of 10/1/70; Dr. Murray N. Rothbard in "The Great Women's Liberation Issue: Setting it Straight", and James Davidson in "Confessions Of A Male Chauvinist" in the 5/70 and 7/70 issues of *The Individualist* (400 Bonifant, SS, Md. 20902); even *The Abolitionist* has not been completely free from such decidedly un-libertarian theorizing: see "Some Comments On Women's Liberation" by John Brotschol in Vol. I, #10. The gist of these articles (insofar as any short summation of four such articles can be accurate) is that the women's liberation movement is lacking in sophisticated (free market) economic understanding, has little grasp of who their real enemy is ("Their claims of 'oppression' except where related to government interference, are wholly irrational" — Davidson); seemingly on this basis, the women's liberation movement is then castigated for being a fad, for lesbianism (Rothbard), for worrying about sex objectification (Tuccille), for not being children oriented enough, for advocating free day care and abortions (Brotschol), and for not having a sense of humor about attacks on women's liberation (Davidson).

The reason such libertarian attacks on women's liberation seem to me to be counterproductive is not because I think that the women's liberation movement adheres strictly to the tenets of libertarianism. It clearly does not. It is because I think that such demands for "purity" will prevent libertarianism from becoming a force in the real world. Moreover, if such demands for ivory

tower purity were carried over to other areas, libertarianism would be reduced to opposition to all struggles against the status quo, for which of *them* is completely pure? Have the heroic defenders against U.S. imperialism in North Vietnam a fully libertarian theory of private property rights? Does Tijerina in New Mexico know of Locke's homesteading principles? Did Saint Malcolm know of the evils of minimum wage legislation? Mao may be a hard money man, but are his views on comparative advantage theory all that a purist libertarian could wish? Jane Jacobs is "weak" on certain implications of the libertarian theory of internalizing external economies, as is Karl Hess on economic scarcity, as is Noam Chomsky on individualist anarchism, as is Dr. Thomas Szasz on democratic statism. Interestingly enough, the four writers and especially Rothbard, have been in the forefront of the libertarian tendencies. Why have they failed to carry through with women's liberation, an anti status-quo and potentially anti statist movement if there ever was one?

One result of this curious lacunae cannot be overlooked. And that is the attacks these four libertarians feel compelled to make which have nothing to do with libertarianism. Lesbianism, for instance. How consenting adults choose to relate to each other is about as relevant to libertarianism as is the decision of whether or not to play checkers. (For a beautifully insightful statement on what is and what is not relevant to libertarianism, see "What is a Libertarian" in the May 1969 issue of *Libertarian Connection*, P.O. Box 90913, L.A., Cal. 90009). Surely, *the* basic tenet of libertarianism is the right of voluntary association. Sexual objectification, and attacks on it as well (by women's lib) is *irrelevant* to libertarianism, also. Some people in the free society will choose to promote it; others will advertise against it. *As libertarians*, we must, I think, take a completely neutral attitude toward either (*all*) lifestyles(s). After all, has the revolution against use of the political means (aggression against non-aggressors) progressed to such a degree where we can afford to waste time on what people shall choose to do with that freedom? Hardly. Let us then concentrate on how to achieve that freedom in the first place and leave off concentrating on what to do with the freedom once attained.

Let us, rather, demonstrate to the women's liberation movement that it is the state that is responsible for their all too real grievances. The state, and not all men, who are the aggressors. Let us demonstrate to them that it is the state,

admittedly composed mainly of *men*, that is the enemy of all people, men and women both. Take the wage differential between men and women, for instance. Some of this differential can be accounted for by the differential in education, skills, etc. (How to account for differences in education, etc. is another problem, one that does not concern discrimination on the part of employers against women; employers would "discriminate" in favor of *any* group with greater skill because greater skill means greater productivity). But how about the wage differential between men and women with the same skill? We need not resort to sexist discrimination as an explanation even here because there is still one more factor that the non-discriminating, profit maximizing employer will take into account: women have a much higher probability of taking a few years off from the job (for reasons that any employer cannot be held responsible) than do men; such that if he hires the average man and woman with the same skills (as long as they stay on the job!) at the same wage, he is far more likely to lose money on the woman than on the man. This cannot be sexist discrimination because if this situation prevailed with blond and red-headed men, red-heads would earn less money not because of their hair color, but because of their lower attachment to the labor force. But what of the woman who has equal skills, and who not only has no intention of leaving for motherhood, but who *will not* leave for this reason. Is she not being discriminated against solely because of her sex? She most certainly is (assuming that she has equal abilities in *all* relevant respects)! The fault, however, is not with the employer, who cannot distinguish this career oriented woman from her motherhood oriented sisters, but rather with the state, which legally prevents her from so distinguishing herself. In the fully free market, long term labor contracts, which have been interpreted by the courts as slave contracts, and hence illegal, would be one form of guarantee of labor market attachment; these might carry a penalty proviso if the woman later leaves the labor market for child care.

Speaking of child care, what are we to make of Brotschol's opposition to parents' dumping their children in day care centers on the ground that this violates parental obligation to children. Would he also oppose the practice of baby-sitting on this ground? Rothbard recognizes governmental interference with child care in the form of requiring that day centers provide licensed personnel such as registered nurses and by immigration restrictions which restrict the entry of governesses into this country. But instead of indicating these as examples of statist exploitation which libertarians can join forces with the women's liberation movement in opposing, he makes the first into still another criticism of women's lib and buries the second in a footnote. What of *free* day care? Or, more accurately, day care at governmental expense. There are many libertarians who would oppose this as theft from the taxpayers. I would say that if we were to consistently apply the purist view that all subsidies from the state are equivalent to theft from taxpayers and therefore illegitimate we would practically condemn ourselves (and certainly the movement against statism) to death. There would be nothing that could please the state more. We would have to refrain from using streets and roads, refrain from availing ourselves of the public subsidies involved in air, rail, and road subsidies which includes eating food

shipped by any of these means. This, in turn, would lead to either starvation or a life at the subsistence level in the backwoods, at best. Not only, however, is this purist libertarian argument bereft of all sense in a practical way; more important, it is also mistaken even on the grounds of strict libertarianism. For strictly speaking, when people gain at the expense of government, it is not taxpayers they are stealing from, but the state itself, who after all, legitimately or not, *controls* (owns) the goods in question, that they are *liberating*. This is and must be liberation and not theft because one cannot *steal* from the illegitimate owner; one can only recover or liberate stolen property from the statist thief. Would the libertarian purist cavil were one to promote for himself a Mafioso limousine or a U.S. bomber aircraft? It is important to realize free day care centers (and free abortions too) are just as consistent applications of that great libertarian maxim first uttered by Lenin of "expropriating the expropriators" or relieving the thieves of their ill gotten gains, as recovering Mafioso limousines, U.S. airplanes, or recovering U.S. gold from government ships as Ayn Rand's heroic character Ragnar Danneskjold did in "Atlas Shrugged". (I intend to show the difference between these legitimate rip offs and for example Lockheed's recent subsidy of \$600 million in an article on libertarian class analysis in the next *Abolitionist*). Of course, *governmentally run* day care centers would be anti libertarian in that they would further enhance the state brainwashing apparatus. But nowhere does Brotschol substantiate his claim that the women's liberation movement favors such state control.

Brotschol says: "I do not view abortion as murder but the wholesale liquidation of potential human beings on a whim is yet another indictment against this savage society". I should rather say that the wholesale violation of actual people's rights in forbidding them from getting abortions is the savage indictment, and that the "whim" is the protection of legitimate property rights in that each of us (women included!!) are the sole owners of our own bodies. If it is the baby's life (potential) that is important, then it should be important no matter how the baby was conceived. If a rapist was the baby's father, according to Brotschol, it would seem that abortion would still be a "savage liquidation". Clearly here, the mother has the right concerning what shall grow in her body; even though the parasitic potential baby is presumably "innocent". New York State, in legalizing abortion, has shown itself a truer libertarian (in this case) than Brotschol. But this is not enough. The women's liberation movement still has a legitimate complaint. The law only allows abortions to take place in a hospital and by state approved doctors, thus inflating the price. Surely the libertarian can join women's lib in opposing such statist interference. (See the eminently libertarian views of Tuccille on this matter in the 9/1/70 issue of *Libertarian Forum*).

There are many other cases where libertarianism and women's liberation can clearly find common cause. Let us consider one of the most important: prostitution. I shall quote at some length from a woman who has mastered this and seemingly all subjects related to women's lib. (Why do I not say "mistressed"? Could it be that sexism has been so deeply inculcated into our society that we often, even with the best intentions, think in a sexist way? *The analogies* that come to mind are "blackmail" and "that is white of

you" instead of "whitemail" and "that is black of you" from racism, and "death and taxes" and "public interest" instead of "theft" and "in the ruling class interest" from statism). In an interview with Claudia Dreifus of *Penthouse Magazine* Kate Millett is quoted as follows:

"Whores are the political prisoners of the feminist movement. They are considered criminals for no other reason than the fact that they are women. Prostitutes are jailed because they are women — for no other reason. In New York, it's not a crime to sell sex. It is, however, a crime to solicit for that sale. Well, soliciting is something that men do every minute of the day. Walk down any block for two minutes and some creep will solicit you. But men aren't jailed for solicitation— they have pricks. Women are jailed. And they're jailed because they have cunts. Prostitutes live in a condition of virtual serfdom to their pimps, and they get no protection from the law. Pimps beat them all the time to keep them in line, and there's nothing they can do about it. The police, particularly the Vice Squad, are their other pimps. If a pimp is defined as a man who makes his living off women who sell their bodies, then by definition the Vice Squad is in the pimping business. Because when these women are not paying their pimps, they are bribing the Vice Squad...Legalization is the first step to abolishing the necessity for prostitution. Besides, it's terribly important to women in The Life that the practice be legalized. Once it's legalized, you see, it will be easier for them to get out from under the yokes of the pimps and the police."

I would not want it to be thought that I totally oppose any criticism of the left in general or of the women's liberation movement in particular. For instance were I to criticize Kate Millett on the above quote, I would first make it abundantly clear that I think her eloquence, sense of justice, hatred of statism set a standard libertarianism would be proud to attain. I would then warn of possible over-generalization, of moving from the view that pimps who aggress against non-aggressing ones who are *hired* by prostitutes on a completely voluntary basis, much in the way that movie stars hire agents, are evil. If I were in a linguistic analytic frame of mind I might even make the point that just as bribing is only another name for buying ("I bribed the grocer into giving me a quart of milk for 35¢") so is prostitution only another name for selling ("I sold myself to the Acme Corporation for \$100 per week as a clerk"). The usual meaning for prostitution includes the idea that what is sold is worth more than the sale price. Yet a moment's reflection on the principles of human action will convince us that the seller valued the sale price higher than what was sold otherwise she would not have voluntarily made the sale.) I most certainly would not, however, make what might well be interpreted as nasty comments in print about "what a great set of knockers Kate Millett has". Can we next look forward to a Tuccille comment slurring physical characteristics of blacks, Indians, hippies? I would not agree that "Surely, we should see the women's lib movement for what it is, a laughable diversion which detracts from the real struggle for liberation from the state". Does not Davidson realize that violation of prostitutes' rights is neither laughable nor irrelevant to state exploitation? Nor would I quote Valerie Solanis, Rita Mae Brown, "A Weatherwoman" and Robin Morgan and describe woman's lib a "Raucous, noisy blather, harridan,

crackpot, termagant, unkempt wrestlers, lesbians, aggressive, as Rothbard has done. It is all too easy to discredit an entire movement on the basis of quotes from several adherents. We can take some of Leonard Read's present views on obedience to law, ("One must obey *all* laws") characterize them as libertarian, and thus discredit libertarianism; we could do the same with some of the more extreme pacifist views of Robert LeFevre ("One cannot cut the chains that bind one, for they are the private property of the kidnapper"). We could then, perhaps, castigate right wing libertarians as "Statists, adherents of the status quo, apologists and running dogs for U.S. imperialism, etc.". This might be emotionally fulfilling, but if we are serious libertarians, we will eschew such counterproductive name-calling in favor of serious movement building.

Last, let us consider Brotschol's view that "Women's liberation with their demands is probably one of the most statist oriented movements yet developed and libertarians should think twice before bootlicking it". I would say, rather, that women's lib, although not very conversant at all with free market economic principles, is potentially an anti statist group; that such potential can hardly be developed by articles such as the four we are considering; that "whether we like it or not, the only revolution in town happens to be a left oriented one"; that, unless we will be happy to be confined to the "dust bin of history", we shall have to find some positive way to relate to it.

BROTSCSCHOL REPLIES:

Mr. Sherman, the tone of your article implies that all those who do not favor the main proposals of women's lib are acting as male chauvinists and hence, believe women to be inferior. I have many reservations about the effect the current demands of women's lib will have on the growth of the state bureaucracy and the lack of concern for human life before and after birth. However, I don't think this makes me a sexual racist. Today's state schools act as brainwashing institutions for the status quo. I don't want to make the process more efficient by handing the state their victims at less than one year of age while the parents wash their hands in a basin of paper money.

In his article, Peter Sherman supports abortion on the grounds that women own their own bodies and have a right to determine what will or will not exist within its perimeter. He has put the fetus in the same class as a germ. I have not called abortion "savage liquidation" Mr. Sherman. I suggest you read my article more carefully. Your criticism is only valid in that I should have elaborated my case more fully. People involved in the field of medicine say that the fetus is a fully developed human being (heart, eyes, etc.) at six months of pregnancy. New York State agrees with me Mr. Sherman, that abortions afterward are criminal. With regard to earlier abortions, women are perfectly aware of the risks involved in sexual intercourse and unless she or her partner compensate for these facts of nature, she holds some moral responsibility for her actions. I'm not saying she is committing murder or her act is criminal but the woman must live with her decision. I just think that if abortions become the thing to do while pregnancies could have been avoided with the proper birth control devices that this *is* an indictment against a society which condemns the killings in Vietnam and Biafra in one breath while deciding who lives and dies in the other. I

stated that monetary costs might act as a barrier against abortions. I should know better. Peter Sherman has told me that at \$50 an abortion, you get \$50 worth of regulation and if the costs were higher the poor get the shaft. I concede on this point, although he does not mention it in his article.

For your information Mr. Sherman, Bella Abzug in her congressional campaign in New York City called for "free" state run day care centers and you can pick up any book on women's lib and listed in their demands is state financed day care centers. In the *Handbook of Women's Liberation* compiled by Joan Robbins, one plan calls for poor people to be employed as baby sitters while women with rich parents or husbands go off to college. Of course, this is a good way to give the poor some shit job and money to keep their mouth shut while these liberationists are off training for 15 thousand dollar a year jobs. Isn't it strange, how the poor always get dead end jobs which always seem to benefit the white middle class. The Gloria Steinems are linking the oppression against minorities with male chauvinism. This is nothing but an attempt by some guilt ridden liberals to share in rhetoric only, the oppression of the poor. Women face some discrimination in business; promotion is difficult and the wages of women are considerably below that of their male counterparts. But this is because in the past, married women have generally been content to work for wages which supplement their husband's pay check. Times have changed. There has recently been an influx of college educated, single women on the labor market who have begun demanding more money for their services. This has awakened married women who have joined women's lib. I find no argument against increased wages but to blame the entire situation on men is absurd. I expect that organization and social pressure will rectify this condition and this will be the main contribution of a middle class women's lib to America. Women get the shaft but to equate this with the plight of the poor and the nineteen year old draftee is idiotic.

My comments on the dumping of children in day care centers that are not state run was purely personal. I certainly have no right to prevent such an occurrence, it was only an observation based on some personal experience.

Women's lib "is potentially an anti statist group" according to Peter Sherman. That is true but that doesn't mean we have to bootlick their current proposals and not offer some criticism. In fact, how does Sherman expect to change some aspects of women's lib when he's afraid to open his mouth and register a disapproving note?

WAR: Collectivism at its Worst

by Roy Halliday

Collectivism is the mistake of mentally lumping people into categories, making a few generalities about the categories, and then treating people as though they are fully defined by the qualities ascribed to the category in which they were lumped. This is the best method ever devised for obscuring the rights of the individual.

Collectivism is used by Marxists when they dismiss the arguments of economists by calling them apologists of an exploiting class. It is used by racists when they deny a man his rights because his race is "inferior". It is used by social planners when they use people as though they are things to experiment with and arrange like flowers in their private

gardens. But the most abominable form of collectivism is the philosophy of total war.

Each time the science of weapons advances morality recedes. With the acceleration of the arms race has come a proportional disregard for the rights of the individual in the logistics of war.

Modern weapons of war such as missiles with nuclear warheads, "conventional" bombs, and artillery are very good for obliterating all forms of life over vast areas of land, but are very impractical for singling out particular individuals for destruction. So, in order to morally justify the use of such weapons, it has become necessary for the war makers to spread the collectivistic philosophy of total war.

To justify the use of weapons which cannot be used selectively, it is necessary to adopt concepts of collective guilt: guilt by association; guilt by nationality; guilt by geographic location. Whole populations of countries have to be considered responsible for the crimes of their governors. How else can one see any justice in the concept of nuclear retaliation?

The old conception of war was that the opposing armies would fight it out between themselves and leave civilians alone. The killers were satisfied in killing each other and the decent people were left relatively at peace. This was a much better theory than the present one.

The modern philosophy of total war lumps soldiers, civilians, men, women, and children together and holds everyone responsible for the crimes of their rulers. Modern war pits the collective *us* (all of us) against *them* (all of them). Individuals no longer merit consideration. The only personalities are the personalities attributed to nations. The "national interest", "national pride" and the "national will" become the supreme values. The "Enemy" becomes the scapegoat for the existing miserable state of affairs and they are depicted as unfit to live. So, we can righteously use our nice modern weapons and vaporize the gooks, japs, reds, or whatever. Besides, life is cheap to *them*. They don't appreciate it like *we* do — everybody knows that.

The thinking which morally justifies war is the worst kind of collectivism because it gives the greatest power to the greatest criminals — governments. The sole beneficiaries of war are the oppressors and their cohorts who use the hysteria generated by their wars to gain more control over people's lives.

Those who wish to put and end to war and oppression must put and end to the governments which cause them. In doing this it is important not to fall into the collectivist way of thinking. If revolutionaries adopt collectivist premises they will not be likely to respect the rights of individuals during or after the revolution. They would be more likely to resort to terrorist tactics, use bombs and rockets, and escalate the struggle into a modern civil war in which innocent people are slaughtered by both sides. Those who wish to defend the rights of innocent civilians would have to oppose such revolutionaries as well as the forces of government.

The final revolution must be fought defensively. The means used must be guerrilla tactics which make it possible to single out the criminals from the masses. Each action by the revolutionaries should be a clear case of defending someone's rights. Prisoners should be freed from their cells,

selective slavery centers (draft boards) should be incapacitated, weapons of mass destruction should be destroyed, police should be prevented from kidnapping people, the commander-in-chief and other active conspirators in crime should be divested of their power to threaten people's lives. When this is done, and only when this is done, will it be possible for men to live in peace in a society based on individual rights.

ANARQUISMO EN CUBA: VENCERE?

by Steve Halbrook

For libertarians, the Cuban Revolution presents a web of contradictions. K.S. Karol recently described the Cuban system as "authoritarian centralization coupled to anarchic decentralization." It is fortunate that the latter has existed to a surprising degree, possibly more so in the political sphere than the economic sphere. One of the most important phenomena in this regard is the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDR), of which 70% of the Cuban population are members. The masses on each block formed the CDRs virtually spontaneously in 1960 to combat counterrevolution, and to this day they are neighborhood controlled. "The CDRs are the revolutionary power at the block level," said Carol Miranda, a CDR coordinator, adding that their importance derives from the fact that "the very long term perspective in the development of our society is the progressive elimination of the state apparatus or its reduction to a minimum." CDR members take turns guarding buildings, streets, etc. and combatting crime. "Because of the vigilance program," Lee Webb commented after a visit to Cuba, "police are rarely seen. Neighborhood people assume most of their functions." In general "the Cuban government has turned over important powers to these community organizations." It is the CDRs rather than a huge central bureaucracy that "are the basic administrative units of the Castro government," as one rightwinger admitted in the Aug. 20, 1970 *Wall St. Journal*. The CDRs also organize the *tribunales populares* which assume most judicial functions in Cuba. The judges are elected in mass meetings on each block, and when an alleged crime occurs both accused and accuser have the right to veto the judge. (Lee Webb, *Guardian* Nov. 1, 1969 and Jan. 17, 1970)

It should be clear from the fact that the people are armed that U.S. imperialist talk of "Cuban totalitarianism" is false and hypocritical. Another visitor to Cuba, Adam Hochschild, declared in the March 1970 issue of *Liberations*: "But I think Cuba is a long way from being a 'police state.' No government that ruled by force alone would freely place arms in the hands of a high proportion of the civilian population—millions of Cubans belong to the militia."

In the past, things were not as anarchistic in the economic sector. To be sure, a great libertarian goal was accomplished when the Cuban Revolution triumphed over the U.S. puppet Batista dictatorship of landlords and bourgeoisie and the peasants got the land and the workers the factories. In many ways, there has been an absence of economic dogmatism since then; thus, in 1967 when K.S. Karol asked Fidel about the widespread existence of peasants owning individual plots and producing for profit, the response was that "we are also anxious not to antagonize our small peasants by behaving like sectarians."

Yet sectarianism has persisted in many areas. Rather than following the Lenninist model of development-market socialism—Fidel insists on leaping to communism. In 1968 he asserted that "prices could never be allowed to set themselves in a socialist economy. Prices have to be set in an arbitrary manner, not in consideration of cost of production," and this has resulted in many misallocations of resources. Then again there is that moralistic eighteenth century prejudice against money, which even the Chinese have overcome; failing to see that in itself the universal equivalent is quite harmless and that the only trouble before the Revolution was that the wrong people owned it all (the governing elite instead of the masses). The Cubans have gone too far in abolishing it, thereby sabotaging economic calculation. The communist ideal of free goods can be realized only under post-scarcity, yet in 1967 education, social security, electricity, water, telephones, sports and houses and furnished rooms were "free." There are no longer bus fares and there have been strides to abolish rents of all kinds. The suicidal nature of these policies is evident from the scarcities of all kinds that exist in Cuba today.

"And we shall continue along this path until one day—nearer than you may think—food and clothing will also be supplied *gratis* by the state," Fidel informed Karol in 1967. As Lenin pointed out, such a leap from market socialism in an underdeveloped country could only enhance the power of the bureaucracy. Consequently it was attitudes such as those espoused by Fidel that made necessary a battle against bureaucracy in the same year he made the above statement. As Karol notes in his new book, *Guerillas in Power*: "The Cuban leaders had obviously come to realize that in the absence of control by a 'ruling class' the bureaucracy has an invariable tendency to act 'on its own behalf.' But to remedy this situation all they could think of was to increase the powers of the executive, instructing its representatives to 'discuss and examine' the views and suggestions of the rank and file." As Karol adds, only the method of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, which renounces Stalinist "primitive socialist accumulation" carried out by an authoritarian bureaucracy, would have been effective. Yet late in 1969 it was officially proclaimed that the Soviet model of the 30's—forced industrialization and top-down collectivization—was perfect for, and being applied in, Cuba.

The result could have only been increased bureaucratism. After a visit that very year, which he describes in the Dec. 1969 issue of *Liberations*, Adam Hochschild wrote: "Decisions are made from the top down, yet by officials who are more closely in touch with the people than in many places with a formally more democratic structure." Few seemed interested in whether managers were appointed from above or below. "On the Isle of Pines at least, people really are being 'transformed' into less materialistic beings—but into more obedient than creative ones." Maurice Zeitlin, another recent visitor, describes the same contradiction between anarchism and centralization in *Ramparts*, March 1970. The anarchist aspects: "Informal social relations are direct; the distinctions of status which evoke subtle patterns of deference and obeisance to persons in authority seem to be absent." Unlike in the U.S., "the authority of those toward

the top of the formal structure of the plan is limited and hedged in a number of ways," and the workers appeal to their *Consejo de Trabajo* when neither party nor union satisfies their grievances. The statist aspects: "The possibility also exists that under the social pressure of what Che called 'the weeds that shoot up so easily in the fertilized soil of state subsidization,' of vested interests that may emerge (risen careerists, bureaucrats and political opportunists, and of some members of the old privileged strata incorporated into positions of authority), the presently clear thrust toward social equality could be subtly, even unconsciously, deflected." In fact: "At present, despite the apparently ample participation of the workers in discussions and decisions concerning the *implementation* of the national economic plan set for their plant, the workers have no role whatsoever, to my knowledge, in determining the plan itself. They have nothing to say about investment priorities; the decision as to what and how much is to be produced is made by the central planning bodies of the Revolutionary Government responsible to the Council of Ministers."

The failure to reach the goal of a 10 million ton sugar harvest last summer was the education through struggle for Cuba's leaders. In the Aug. 3 issue of *Graha* Jorge Risquet, Minister of Labor, admitted that passive resistance by the working class contributed to Cuba's economic problems. Labor inefficiency stemmed from the fact that there was no rapport between the workers on the one hand and the state administrators, party officials, and labor bureaucrats on the other. Of the total working force, he pointed out, 10% were officials and another 10% were technicians. "How is it possible to pretend that that worker feels himself owner of his factory?" There must be workers control, and "the bureaus of the advanced Workers Movement must be turned into freely elected trade union locals which get all the workers to participate." Risquet proposes "collective organizations at the base," wherein the workers themselves—and not just their elected representatives, much less state appointed managers—would make decisions.

Fidel has taken a decidedly libertarian approach as a result of recognizing his past errors. In his speech on May 20 he humbled himself with these words: "We can say with absolute certainty that the people didn't lose the battle. We—we alone—are the ones who lost the battle. The administrative apparatus and the leaders of the revolution are the ones who lost the battle. We are the ones who haven't measured up to the 10 million." In his famous July 26 speech Fidel, referring to the economic failures, said of himself and the other leaders: "We could best be classified as ignorant." After offering to resign, he added that institutional changes were necessary as the problems could not be solved "simply by replacing individuals." He urged that the people "take a greater part in decision-making" through mass organizations, "which have been neglected." In his Sept. 3 speech he went even further: "If a worker makes a wrong decision, it doesn't matter: the people have decided. Without the people socialism loses the battle: it turns into bureaucracy, its ideology is weakened." On Sept. 28 he declared his purpose to give the people "direct control over production and distribution."

Even more important is that conscious militant opposition to bureaucracy is spreading to other sectors of the population besides the leaders. In a dispatch from Havana dated Dec. 7, two Canadian journalists report the following encouraging information: "Among radical

students there is a strong current of criticism of economic management by the Cuban Communist party and the government bureaucracy. In a relatively new development, Cubans loyal to Mr. Castro guardedly express unhappiness with the rise with what they call the 'new class' of government bureaucrats. Complaints may be heard about Cuban party officials, army commanders and government administrators who are considered to enjoy privileges. A segment of the student population is now calling for a 'cultural revolution' against what they see as opportunistic officialdom. Premier Castro is reportedly to be currently engaged in a series of meetings with groups of dissident students, intellectuals and party members." (*NY Times*, Dec. 11, 1970)

In China, it took three sectors of the population to make a "cultural revolution" which overthrew the State and substituted a basically anarchist society: a great mass of regular workers who were sick of being exploited by bureaucrats; students who detested authoritarianism and classes which are above the workers; and a group of dedicated leaders whose ideal was true proletarian democracy. Presently, all three of these elements exist in Cuba, and the struggle has begun to sharpen. *Adios, burocracia! Hola revolucion!*

LIBERTARIANISM & THE BLACK PANTHERS

by Geoffrey Hall

William F. Buckley Jr. looks upon the Black Panthers as "hoodlums" fully deserving of the assaults the police have made on them such as the Chicago raid a year ago in which Fred Hampton and Mark Clark were murdered. But you have to wonder about a "libertarian" who even condones the killing of two *hoodlums* in their beds by armed servants of the State. There is a need to reverse the current trend among some libertarians of disregarding the Panthers' persecution because they are not ideologically pure or because their language is sometimes violent. Rather, we should be able to see many of their absurd points as mere trivialities.

First, the centralist and authoritarian structure of the Party—the individual is subordinate to the organization—and their silly, illogical Marxism-Leninism are not important enough to warrant non-support. Similarly, their violent prose is largely a part of the revolutionary, ghetto vernacular, used for effect and easily overlooked.

We do not have to support them as a Party, but as a rallying point and for their libertarian ideas and actions.

A major contribution of the Panthers to the black ghetto is the variety of programs that they have started, among them free breakfast, medical clinic, and clothing programs. They do not want these services to fall under control of the federal government, and in fact are advocating *voluntary* socialism. As Bobby Seale says in *Seize the Time*, the Panthers hold a more anti-statist position than any politician—community control. Their material includes a chart showing that a decentralized police department would boost ghetto employment (as officers), end racist harassment, and render the ruling class unable to smash strikes using the police. The Panthers also exemplify the libertarian idea that violence against a non-aggressor is wrong. They have always stated a belief in armed self-defense, and in almost all cases of Panther/police

clashes you will find that the police began the confrontation by attacking a Panther office or home. In some cases, as in New Orleans and Los Angeles, the Panthers have had time to shoot back at the police; in others, as in Chicago, the raiders so surprised the raidees that they were able to fire and kill Panthers without any police casualties.

What everyone must understand is that deserving or not the Black Panthers have been labelled Enemy #1 by the State, and unless we actively support them they will be stamped out. We cannot ignore Hoover's statement that they are the most dangerous group in America. Clearly we must back them, if only to help save our own necks from similar persecution in the future.

ALRIGHT, YOU'VE HEARD THE *WORDS*—NOW HOW ABOUT *CONTRIBUTING!*

Panther Defense Office 520 Chapel Street New Haven Conn. 06511

LETTER TO THE EDITORS

FRIENDS: Issue #10 of THE ABOLITIONIST is an excellent piece of libertarian thought; general in scope to interest any intelligent revolutionary. The monthly consistency and improving quality of diverse articles puts THE ABOLITIONIST in the forefront of meaningful libertarian journalism.

Lysanderly yours,
William B. Steele Jr.

BUSTS

CENSUS RESISTORS ARRESTED

Bill Danks of the Hawaii Radical Libertarian Alliance and 3 other Hawaii libertarians have become the first census resisters to be arrested for refusal to cooperate with the 1970 Census. The Hawaii group is being defended by ACLU lawyers and expects to bring their case before the Supreme Court.

LIBERTARIAN ENTREPRENEUR BUSTED IN MINNESOTA

Tom Malloy of Kenyon Minnesota was arrested in what police claim was a large scale marijuana "factory" at which they confiscated 1,000 pounds of grass. In a letter smuggled out of the Blue Earth County Jail, Tom writes: "I've been talking about anarchism with a lot of people, rapping on the free market and the theory of the ruling class. The son of the head of the political science dept. of Mankato State College came out to the lab on the morning of the bust and we were rapping free market and tripping when the pigs came in. They offered him immunity if he would talk, but he's been keeping quiet. Since I've been in jail I've been rapping with fellow prisoners, especially political ones and several have indicated an interest in working in a free market group when we get out of jail".

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